Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1704 - April 9 2010

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1704 with a release date of Friday, April 9th, 2010 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. 911 service fails in Lincoln Nebraska and its ham radio to the rescue. Also, Southern California hams prove that they can mobilize for an earthquake, a Kentucky radio club wants to recycle old TV towers for emergency communications use and National Public Radio says that ham radio is alive and growing. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1704 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: LINCOLN NE 911 OUTAGE BRINGS OUT HAM RADIO Y2K PLAN

Its was no April Fools joke on Thursday, April 1st. Thats when the local telecommunications provider Windstream lost its interconnect ability and phones literally went out in South-Eastern Nebraska. It also brought out a cadre of well trained ham radio operators to fill in until service could be restored. Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, lives in Lincoln and explains what failed:

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KONEB: "At about 7:45 a.m. the main switch which controls the Windstream Inter-Exchange switching in Lincoln, Nebraska, and 12 surrounding counties failed, and then the redundant switch failed as well causing phone calls that would go between exchanges to be disrupted as well as all 911 service in the multi-county area to cease to exist. So we hams have been out on location throughout the city of Lincoln and areas of Lancaster County stationed at major intersections in case somebody needs to contact 911."

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According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, 911 service was out for all or part of Butler, Seward, Saunders, Clay, Adams, northern Gage, Jefferson, Cass, Saline, Richardson and Fillmore counties, as well as Lancaster county. Responding to the emergency were 68 hams belonging to the Lincoln Amateur Radio Club and Lincoln ARES. They were activated throughout the day to become the emergency communications replacement for the 911 service. It was a callout that Lancaster Country Emergency Coordinator Reynolds Davis, K0GND, says that area hams had spent over a decade preparing for. Preparations that began because of dire predictions News Years Eve 2000:

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K0GND: "We implemented our Y2K plan which we put together in late 1999 in anticipation of all the doom and gloom people had worried about. Although it was not necessary that night, since then we have implemented it four different times for massive telephone outages."

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While the predicted computer failures of Y2K never occurred, it did place Lincoln area hams in a unique position to respond to communications emergencies that have occurred over the past decade. So nobody was surprised when the general call for assistance went out this time. Again, Reynolds Davis, K0GND:

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K0GND: "On Y2K night the newspaper had a map of the city printed on the front page, and at major intersections -- each one of these within a half miles of residents of the city -- that's how they were selected. And we (hams) became a phone booth with flashing lights and a sign on the car and so forth -- should an emergency call be needed after midnight on that night. I think that plan covered some 60 intersections within the city

"This time it was a scaled back call-up but none-the-less it was the same plan and we ended up with 26 major intersections last Thursday when this all occurred. And they were staffed essentially from 8 in the morning until about 11:30 p.m. when we finally secured"

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What may surprise some is that this entire operation only entailed the use of one repeater on the two meter band. Davis credits the self discipline and emergency service training of the regions ham radio community for making this possible. He also notes that the training never stops:

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K0GND: "We have nightly nets on the same repeater. There are ARES nets every night of the week. We do lots of drills and a tremendous amount of public service. Last year almost 5000 volunteer hours of public service by the club. And all of those things keep your discipline up and your ability to listen out: - which is a key to running a large net with a lot of people.

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K0GND tells Newsline that thankfully the ham radio communicators only had to handle a small number of 911 incidents. The worst of these was a house fire that they were requested to report. Another dealt with a police officer involved in tracking down a missing child. And it took the better part of a day before 911 service was restored cross the affected area and the ham radio operators could stand down and go home. (ARNewsline(tm))

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RESCUE RADIO: SOCAL HAMS ACTIVATE FOR MEXICALI QUAKE

Hams in Los Angeles County activated briefly after shock waves from the 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Baja California. Mexico, were felt at about 03:50 PM Pacific time on Easter Sunday. The Los Angeles Section ARES immediately activated it's emergency net with hams from all over the area checking in.

But there were no reports of commercial communications outages, utility outages or even any damage in and around the local area and soon attention was turned to the South. That's when the nets Spanish speaking operators were asked to monitor the High Frequency bands for possible traffic from the quake area.

Dr. Armondo Montalvo, KI6TAA, in the Los Angeles suburb of Woodland Hills was able to contact Franscisco Menses, XE2FMS, in the city of Mexicali, Mexico, along with mobile operators XE2DZZ and XE2BRL . Initial reports said that most stations in and around the quakes epicenter were without electric power. Also, the major highway between Mexicali and Tijuana, Mexico suffered severe thrust fault damage. This information was forwarded to the United States Geologic Survey for it to act on.

In all, some three dozen stations were involved at one time or another during the call-up, but no large scale ham radio relief effort was needed on either side of the United States and Mexico border. Never the less, area ham radio emergency planners say it was definitely a good test of the ability of the regions hams to respond at a moments notice. (LAX ARES)

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RESCUE RADIO: KY CLUB WANTS TO RECYCLE OLD TOWERS FOR EMCOMM WORK

A group of Bowling Green, Kentucky area ham radio operators want to give new life to old residential TV towers by incorporating them into an emergency communications system. The Kentucky Colonels Amateur Radio Club and the Kentucky 4th District Amateur Radio Emergency Services are seeking donations of the TV towers, which have become increasingly obsolete as more households have turned to cable, satellite and digital TV providers.

In an article in the Bowling Green Daily News, Bill Schlicht, KJ4DGW of the Kentucky Colonels Amateur Radio Club said members will remove the towers for free, recondition them and install them at numerous locations in the 10-county Barren River Area Development District. This, to support emergency communications among ham radio operators, hospitals, county emergency management directors, American Red Cross chapters and other emergency workers.

Schlicht told the paper that club members are covered by liability insurance during performance of club activities, and removing the TV towers will not cost the homeowner anything. He says that his ham radio association wants to set up at least 16 towers, mainly at area hospitals where ham radio operators can communicate with emergency workers during a large-scale disaster. There are about 400 amateur radio operators in Warren County and the Bowling Green area.

You can read the rest of this article at:
http://bgdailynews.com/articles/2010/03/31/news/news6.txt (BG News,
 eHam.net)

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RESCUE RADIO: UK CLUB GETS 5000 POUND PUBLIC SERVICE GRANT

Meantime, over in the United Kingdom, the Itchen Valley Amateur Radio Club

has been awarded nearly 5000 British Pounds in Lottery funding. This, to assist with providing community based radio projects that will include supporting the Radio Amateur Emergency Network in providing communications coverage for disaster and emergency exercises as well as real time responses.

The grant will primarily be used to equip a portable radio station with a 25 foot trailer tower with antennas, and a portable generator system to enable the station to provide communications services without mains power or the normal mobile phone networks. This stand alone capability will allow the club to contribute to the telecommunications infrastructure supporting long-distance events that involve communications and control in isolated places.

In addition, part of the grant will provide funds for working with local youth organizations such as Scouts and Guides, as well as other public projects to broaden awareness of amateur radio. 5000 British Pounds is the equivalent of about $7600 United States dollars.

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BREAK 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club repeater serving Rockville Maryland.

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: NPR SAYS HAM RADIO IS GROWING

National Public Radio says that ham radio is alive and well, and its even produced a segment of its All Things Considered program to prove it. Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI7UP, has more:

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Ham radio is far from the dying hobby that the nay sayers claim it to be. One that only a few years ago was being touted by techno blogs alongside 35 mm film and home videotape as technologies slated to quickly disappear.

Well, National Public Radio says that the bloggers were wrong because there are now nearly 700,000 U-S citizens who have ham radio licenses. NPR says that number is up by some 60 percent since 1981. And Says NPR, that number is growing.

The NPR story quotes Allen Weiner. He is an analyst at the technology research firm Gartner and Associates. Weiner says that while ham radio will never have the sex appeal of the iPhone, it does have a certain level of what he terms as nerd appeal.

Weiner also explains growth in our specialized communications interest in

this way. He says that if it creates its own experience, that's really what's key here. Conversely, if it just emulates an experience that you can get online, it's not going to grow.

The report concludes by noting that even the most die-hard hams admit that amateur radio will never be a mainstream hobby. But says National Public Radio, people are still discovering the joy of communicating with the technology of amateur radio. A technology that has existed for nearly a century.

Still enjoying ham radio from Scottsdale Arizona, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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You can hear the NPR story on ham radios growth at the URL found at   http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId5586086
(Adapted from NPR web post)

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RADIO LAW: EVEN WHEN ITS WRONG THE FCC IS RIGHT

Parties relying on informal discussions with commission staff do so at their own risk. At least that's the lesson that's been learned KRNW- FM which has been ordered to pay a $5,000 fine for what amounts a simple clerical error based on information a Commission representative gave to the broadcaster.

According to the trade publication Radio World, KRNW FM is located in Chillicothe, Missouri, and is licensed to Northwest Missouri State University. Its case started with the expiration of the license in early 2005, The FCC says that the station didn't file properly until two weeks later, and it didn't seek an STA to continue to operate or give a reason for the failure to file on time.

When the fine was handed down the college, which also owns KXCV FM, appealed. It argued that the fine was unfair because it did in fact try to renew properly. It said FCC staff had told the station manager to file both station renewals on the same form, and the manager did so.

Now, in upholding the fine the commission said that while allows for some stations to file on the same form, the manager should have filed, as she did in the past, a separate renewal application for the KRNW. It added that Commission precedent has established that parties relying on informal discussions with FCC staff do so at their own risk. The commission may still enforce its rules despite the public's reliance on allegedly erroneous staff advice. (RW)

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RADIO LW: FCC LOSES COURT BATTLE OVER NET NEUTRALITY

A federal court in Washington D.C. has handed the FCC a major defeat and at the same time has thrown the future of Internet regulations and United States broadband expansion plans into doubt. It happened on Tuesday, April

6th when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission lacks authority to require broadband providers to give equal treatment to all Internet traffic flowing over their networks. Amateur Radio Newsline's Frank Haas, KB4T, has the details:

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The unanimous ruling by the three-judge panel marks a serious setback for the FCC which is trying to adopt official net neutrality regulations. FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski believes that such rules are needed to prevent phone and cable companies from using their control over Internet access to favor some kinds of online content and services over others.

On the other side, the court decision was a big victory for Comcast Corporation. Comcast is the nation's largest cable company and it had challenged the FCC's authority to impose network neutrality obligations on broadband providers. This following a 2008 Commission finding that centered on Comcast's actions in 2007 when it interfered with an online file-sharing service called BitTorrent.

In its decision, the court essentially held that it was not for the FCC to determine which of Comcast's customers was entitled to better levels of service than another. Rather that this is a business decision that Comcast was free to make.

Public advocacy groups have already reacted negatively to the court decision. They contend that the ramifications of the ruling are much broader. That's because it undercuts the FCC's ability to prevent broadband providers from becoming gatekeepers for many kinds of online services. This could include Internet-based phone services and even software that runs in a Web browser.

The decision also has serious implications for the FCC's national broadband plan released by the FCC last month. The Commission needs undisputed authority to regulate broadband in order to pursue some its key recommendations. In a statement following the release of the decision, the FCC said it remains committed to promoting an open Internet and to policies that will bring the enormous benefits of broadband to all Americans.

At this point the FCC has several options. It can do nothing and let the ruling stand. That's highly unlikely.

It could ask Congress to give it explicit authority to regulate broadband, but that could take years. Or, it could appeal the matter to the United States Supreme Court which could also take years.

Or as some observers believe, the Commission might simply reclassify broadband as a more heavily controlled telecommunications service. One which could be subjected to both intensive scrutiny and heavy regulation.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Frank Haas, KB4T, in Holly Hill, Florida.

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We should know what direction the Commission will take in a matter of weeks. (Published news reports)

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HOT OFF THE PRESS: NEW DX BOOK AVAILABLE BY W9KNI

'A Year of DX' is a new book by noted author Bob Locher, W9KNI that follows him as he makes an all out effort to win the 2008 running of CQ Magazine's DX Marathon. The Marathon is a year long operating event during which a contestant works as many countries and CQ zones as possible, any band or any mode.

While the book chronicles Bob's efforts in the pileups and through the lonely watches of the night, it also contains other discussions of what DX'ing is all about. These include the possibilities of DX'ing in low sun spot periods contributed by Jim Henderson, KF7E, a chapter on optimizing your SSB transmit audio by Hall of Famer Chip Margelli, K7JA, a discussion of what is the ideal linear amplifier, and much more.

Anyone who read and enjoyed Bob's 'Compete DX'er' is sure to find this book equally worthwhile. Its publication date is scheduled for May 1st. More information is on-line at www.idiompress.com/yearofdx.php   (Via e-mail)

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HAMVENTION HAPPENINGS: SPEAKERS LIST RELEASED FOR DX FORUM

The SouthWest Ohio DX Association has started to announced its line-up for the DX Forum at this year's Dayton Hamvention. Guest speakers include Tom Harrell, N4XP, of the K4M Midway Island 2009 DXpedition, George Wallner, AA7JV who operated TX3A from Chesterfield Reef and Paul Ewing, N6PSE of the YI9PSE operation from Iraq. Don Dubob, N6JRL, will be this year's forum moderator and at the close of the session the SouthWest Ohio DX Association will be raffling off a Yaesu FT-2000 transceiver. (SWODXA)

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PROMOTING HAM RADIO: FREE ARRL WEBINAR ON PUBLICIZING FIELD DAY APRIL 22

Hams involved in planning their clubs Field Day activities are invited to take part in free 90 minute webinar on April 22nd. Hosted by the ARRL's Atlantic Division in cooperation with the League's Public Relations Committee, this session will focus on how to publicize your groups Field Day outing so as to gain maximum recognition for the hobby.

Among the topics to be covered will be how to set up a Field Day publicity calendar. How to get audio and video Public Service Announcements on local radio and TV stations. How to get proclamations issued and even how to use social networks like Facebook and Twitter to draw people to your Field Day event.

Also covered will be the correct way to invite elected officials and dignitaries to your Field Day site. Depending on whom you get to show up,

this can bring with it good local, regional or even national press coverage. And according to Allen Pitts, W1AGP, who is the ARRL's Public Relations Manager, the guest list reads like a whose who in ham radio media relations:

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W1AGP: "You have got Walt Palmer recently of ABC News - television; Diana Eng will be working with Facebook and Twitter; Bill Morine on print journalism will be talking on how to schedule and set up things; Kevin O'Dell who until recently made television commercials will be talking about how to make up your own Public Service Announcements and videos. And then of coarse you have got me."

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And I'll be on that panel too talking about media relations with broadcast radio.

Again, the date for this on-line seminar is Thursday, April 22nd beginning at 9:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time. To pre-register take your web browser to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/932645064   (ARRL)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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RESTRUCTURING: BAHARAIN IMPROVES ITS AMATEUR SERVICE

Licensing of the amateur service in the Kingdom of Bahrain has taken a major step forward. This, with the release of new amateur service rules by the nations telecommunications regulatory authority.

New additions for the Bahrain General Class licensees include 135.7 to 137.8kHz with a power limit of 10 watts. Also, regulators have extended the 160 meter band changing the upper limit to 2000 kHz. They have also expanded 40 meters up to 7200 kHz and added access to the 30 meter band as well. Above 30 MHz new additions include 6 meters from 50 to 52MHz and improved access to bands at 430MHz and above.

Also, Bahrain now has a new Intermediate Class license that permits operation at 28 MHz and above with power output to the antenna of 100 watts. Aeronautical Mobile, Maritime Mobile, Mobile and Portable operations are also permitted within the terms of the new license.

It should be noted that with the exception of the segment 50 to 50.5MHz, which is primary, all new allocations have been granted on a secondary

basis. Permitted power to the antenna on all bands except 136 kHz is 1500 watts. (GB2RS)

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WORLDBEAT: WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY APRIL 19

"Amateur Radio: combining communication experience with modern digital techniques" is the theme of this years World Amateur Radio Day. Scheduled for April 18th, World Amateur Radio Day is an international celebration of the hobby sponsored by the International Amateur Radio Union and its member societies representing over 150 countries.

Since 1925, the IARU has been instrumental in coordinating and representing amateur radio on global matters. It says that in today's world that it is radio amateurs who are finding ways to use frequencies at the fringes of the radio spectrum while developing marriages of radio and the internet, and experimenting with digital and satellite communications.

For information about World Amateur Radio Day and the International Amateur Radio Union please take your web browser to www dot IARU dot org. (IARU)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: DARA TO MATCH DONATIONS TO AMSAT

The Dayton Amateur Radio Association says that it will match one-for-one any donations made to AMSAT-NA between now and June 30th of 2010. This, up to a maximum of $5,000.

The matching funds will be earmarked in support of the "Getting AMSAT Back into Space" campaign and help us raise the funds needed for the next satellite project which is a cubesat that will provide a 2 meter-70 Centimeter FM transponder that will match the ground performance of AO-51.

  More on this matching fund is on line at www.amsat.org. (ANS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AMSAT SPACE SYMPOSIUM IN CHICAGO IN OCTOBER

The 2010 AMSAT Space Symposium will be held in Chicago, Illinois from October 8th through the 10th. This years venue is the Elk Grove Holiday Inn near O'Hare Airport. Topics to be covered include presentations on operating techniques along with other sessions covering plans for the future of ham radio in space. For more information please visit www.amsat.org on the World Wide Web. (ANS)

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ON THE AIR: MOONBOUNCE USING THE 1000 FOOT ARECIBO DISH

The Arecibo Observatory Amateur Radio Club will be putting the 1000-foot radio telescope on the air for 432 MHz E-M-E contacts from April 16th to the 18th. The callsign used will be KP4AO with a transmit frequency of 432.045 MHz and receiving between 432.050 to 432.060 MHz. KP4AO will

transmit with 400 watts out but the giant dish will give the signal about 60 db of gain. Translated it means that KP4AO should be able to be heard with a small hand-held yagi pointed at the moon and a good receiver. A 15 db gain antenna and 100 watts will be enough to KP4AO on CW. More is on-line www.southgatearc.org/news/april2010/arecibo_432_moonbounce.htm (Southgate, K1JT)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING MEXICO'S INDEPENDENCE

On the air, word that the Mexican Federal Telecommunications has authorized the use of the special 4 B prefix for Mexican stations throughout the year 2010. The use of this prefix is to celebrate the bicentennial of Mexico's independence and the centennial of the Mexican Revolution. (OPDX)

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ON THE AIR: CV7G CELEBRATES THE FOUNDING OF MODERN URUGUAY

And CX7ABK, will be using the special callsign CV7G between April 17th and the 19th. This operation celebrates the landing of 33 Orientales on Agraciada Beach in Uruguay. This was a militant revolutionary group led by Juan Antonio Lavalleja against the Empire of Brazil. Their actions culminated in the foundation of modern Uruguay. And in celebration of this event CV7G will be on 40 and 20 meter SSB. A special QSL card will be issued. You send your QSL via CX7ABK. (OPDX)

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PROPAGATION: SOLAR WINDSTORM HITS EARTH

In propagation news, what's described as a sharp gust of solar wind hit Earth's magnetosphere on Monday, April 5th, at approximately 0800 UTC. It also sparked the strongest geomagnetic storm of the year.

According to Spaceweather dot com, the event registered 7 on the 0-to-9 K index scale of magnetic disturbances. Although the storm was subsiding by Wednesday morning, April 7th, it was not over and high-latitude sky watchers were told to remain alert for the possibility of aurora propagation. (Spaceweather)

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DX

In DX, PG5M, has made available his story called the 'Pacific 2009 Ultra Light Solo DXpedition' in PDF format on the World Wide Web. Its 12 pages long and goes into detail about his activities and netting 13000 QSOs from Fiji, Tuvalu and Tarawa. You can downloaded it at www.dx.to

On the bands, word that S53A is now active from Zanzibar as 5-eye-one-S. This is his first holiday style trip with some radio

operation as when time permits. He has been reported on 20. 15 and 10 meters mostly on CW. QSL via S53A, direct or via the bureau.

JI5RPT, will be active as JD1BLY from Chichijima Island between May 2nd and the 7th. His operation will be on 40 through 6 meters using CW, SSB, Digital and the Satellites. QSL via his home callsign JI5RPT.

Lastly, , EA8AY, will be active from the Canary Islands as EF8E. This during the CQWW
WPX CW Contest on May 29th and 30th. QSL via EA8AY.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: ITS SPRING ARDF TIME

And finally this week, as the weather warms, it's time to start planning for outdoor radio fun this summer. Opportunities to win medals by finding hidden transmitters are coming, as Newsline's Joe Moell, K0OV, explains.

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More and more hams every year are discovering the fun of tracking hidden radio transmitters in their cars or on foot. The on-foot variety of foxhunting has become an international sport, with names such as foxtailing, radio-orienteering and ARDF. USA is one of about 30 countries with an active ARDF program, including national championships and participation in the World Championships every two years.

To see the USA's best on-foot foxhunters in action, to learn from them, and to try it for yourself, make plans to come to Ohio this spring. The Tenth USA ARDF Championships will get under way on Friday, May 21. It's a three-day weekend of practice sessions, a big two-meter hunt, and another hunt on 80 meters. It's open to anyone at any foxhunting skill level, with or without a ham license. If you're a senior, don't worry about trying to compete against teenagers. Equal medals will be awarded in six separate age categories for OM's from under 18 to over 70. Five similar age categories divide up the YLs. To be even better prepared, attend the optional two-day intensive training camp just before the championships.

What could you win? Possibly a medal and a place on our country's team going to the ARDF World Championships in Croatia this coming September. USA can only field a maximum of three people in each age and gender category, so our national championships determine who will go.

Will this be the year that you win a radio-orienteering medal? The registration deadline is coming soon. So for everything you need to know about the USA Championships, including schedules, registration forms and equipment ideas, point your Web browser to www.homingin.com. That's HomingIn, as one word, homingin.com. You can also learn about the World Championships in Croatia and the annual CQ Worldwide Foxhunting Weekend.

 From southern California, this is Joe Moell Kay-Zero-Oscar-Victor for Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Every year interest in Amateur Radio Direction Finding grows. Who knows. One of these days it could become popular enough that the ham radio community might petition for it to become an Olympic medal level sport. (K0OV)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

Before we go, a reminder that the nominating period for the 2010 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open. Each year, we here at the Amateur Radio Newsline in association with Vertex Standard Corporation -- the makers of Yaesu brand ham radio gear -- and CQ Magazine combine to honor a ham radio operator age 18 or younger for his or her contributions to ham radio or to society itself through ham radio.

All nominations and materials required by the official rules must be received by Amateur Radio Newsline no later than midnight on May 30th. Both "mail-in" and electronic submissions are being accepted this year. Full rules and a downloadable nominating form are now on our website at www.arnewsline.org. Just scroll down until you see "2010 Young Ham of the Year Awards Now Being Accepted" and click on the word "here" to download the directions and the form. You can also leave questions and comments on the official Young Ham of the Year Award page on Facebook dot com.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM, saying 73 from Reno, Nevada, and we thank you for listening.

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